



EASTERN AREA COORDINATING GROUP

Date: July 8, 2019
To: NWCG Participating Agencies
From: Eastern Area Coordinating Group
Subject: 2019 Direction to EA Crew Bosses, Fire Management Officers, Supervisors and others who are responsible for assembling crews.

The Eastern Area (EA) has a long history of mobilizing skilled and qualified fire crews to assist other geographic areas. Each agency within this Geographic Area (GA) is commended for not only developing the skills and qualifications needed for the job; but for also creating an expectation that EA crews and overhead exhibit a high level of professionalism during their assignments.

In an effort to address common and reoccurring issues that come up during mobilization of T2 and T2IA crews this document was produced to provide briefing topics, tools, and a central point for information relevant to EA Crew Bosses to review prior to mobilization and throughout the assignment as well as informing local agency leadership and management. See the [Wildland Fire Incident Management Field Guide](#), PMS 210, NFES 002943 for firefighter safety topics:

- Risk Management
- Fatigue – Work and Rest
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Safety Responsibilities of Wildland Fire Supervisors

Additional issues Crew Bosses should be cognizant of:

Crew Transportation: There has been a significant effort made through the EACG, the Eastern Area Coordination Center (EACC) and the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) to improve modes of crew transportation for Eastern Area T2-IA Crews. Crew Bosses must recognize the fact that not all Geographic Areas (GAs) have the means to provide pickups, SUVs or other 4x4 multi passenger vehicles in lieu of school busses. However when crews are transported on school busses, there is no reason that EA crews should be subjected to riding vehicles and/or drivers that do not meet the safe transportation standards. When crews encounter school busses for their means of transportation, the Crew Boss should be aware of the following: (from 6-Minutes for Safety, LLC)

“Buses should be initially inspected by ground support on arrival at an incident; however, crew bosses need to continually update their situational awareness on the operational condition of their assigned bus. There are four basic vehicle components that need to be continually monitored by the crew boss during the assignment.

1. **Braking system:** *Do the brakes go to the floor when the driver uses them? Does the bus pull to one side when the brakes are applied? Is there fluid leaking onto the back side of the wheel? Does the driver need to add brake fluid frequently? Do the brakes take a long time to “Air Up”?*
2. **Steering system:** *Is there a lot of play in the steering wheel? Is there fluid dripping out of the*

steering box? Does the bus wander from side to side while driving?

3. **Power train:** Does the engine run OK? Is it overheating? Are there drops of fluid noticeable under the bus after it has been sitting for a while? Does the transmission slip?
4. **The Driver:** Is the driver fatigued? Is that person capable of driving safely where you need to go? Is the driver confident and capable? Can they see at night? Are they a safety concern to you and your crew?

If you notice any of these things, ask ground support to inspect the bus again. If there is no ground support, elevate the issue until you are satisfied with the response you get. Do not ignore potential safety problems. It is your duty to report potential safety problems. Talk to the Safety Officer.

Be sure and ask Ground Support or Finance for a [Contractor Performance Rating form](#) and fill it out truthfully. If the bus worked without any problems and the driver was great, document that. If the equipment was causing you concern for your safety and the driver was questionable, let that be known as well. The rating form is designed to give feed back to the Contracting Officer (CO). If you neglect to fill out and turn in a rating form, the CO will never know if the contracted equipment is good or needs to be red flagged for poor performance or safety concerns. The Finance Section will want the evaluation to ensure it gets forwarded to the CO. It is your duty as a crew boss to fill out an evaluation for your bus driver and the bus they are driving your crew around in. This contractor evaluation form is the mechanism to get old, worn out buses and inadequate drivers off the road or reward quality operators who have safe equipment and drivers."

Crew Bosses should file a [SAFENET](#) to document and correct transportation safety deficiencies.

Mobilization Centers: Crew Bosses should read and understand EA Mobilization protocol as documented in the [Eastern Area Interagency Mobilization Guide, Chapter 10](#), pages 10-13 to 10-15. Crew Bosses need to understand that the key to conflict resolution begins with advance communication. If it is necessary for your crew to travel after 2200 hours, or to hotel midway to your final destination, your home unit line officer (FMO, State Fire Supervisor, etc.) must make arrangements with the EACC Center Manager prior to arriving at the Mob Center.

Accident Reporting: Crew Bosses need to inform their crew members that accident and injury reports are time-sensitive and must be properly documented. **It is critical that Crew Bosses know what agency crew members work for.** An improperly documented injury or illness can result in unpaid medical bills and debt collection services coming months after an employee returns home from an assignment. Use the following protocols for reporting an illness or an injury while on your assignment:

Injury / Illness Reporting – STATE PERSONNEL (While on State Payroll NOT ADs)	
FORMS	USE STATE-SPECIFIC FORMS. <u>Follow home agency reporting timeline</u> and home unit notification protocols
NOTIFICATIONS	Immediate supervisors
	Medical Unit and COMP/CLAIMS or FSC
	Notify IARR, or EACC if IARR is unavailable
	Home Unit if not done already while completing State-specific reports
Injury / Illness Reporting – FED PERSONNEL (Including ADs*)	

*This includes State personnel hired as an AD.	
FORMS	CA-1 (Injury occurring in 1 operational shift) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed by employee or supervisor, with signed witness statement if there was a witness. NOTE: The COMP/CLAIMS will complete the CA-1 if the person is taken to the hospital. NOTE: The supervisor for ADs is the home unit hiring official.
	CA-16 (Authorization for Medical Treatment) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will be issued by the COMP/CLAIMS, FSC or ASC
	CA-2 (Occupational disease; occurs over 2 or more shifts) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed by employee or supervisor, with signed witness statement if there was a witness. NOTE: The COMP/CLAIMS will complete the CA-2 if the person is taken to the hospital. The employee is responsible for medical bills and requests reimbursement from OWCP. NOTE: The supervisor for ADs is the home unit hiring official.
NOTIFICATIONS	Immediate supervisors
	Medical Unit / COMP/CLAIMS or FSC
	Notify IARR, or EACC if IARR is unavailable
	Notify Home Unit Supervisor

Payment Documents for Casuals

- Forest Service: The OF-288 and travel will be processed through the Incident Finance Section any time a Type 1 or 2 Incident Management Team is assigned to an incident; a copy is provided to the employee or Crew Boss. If there are travel expenses which can't be processed on the OF-288 (rental vehicle not rented through NERV, expenses the Casual will incur after leaving ICP which require receipts to be reimbursed – parking, baggage fees, etc.) all travel will be processed through ETS2; the casual must contact their hiring unit.
- DOI: The OF-288 and travel is processed by the hiring unit. The original OF-288 is provided to employee or Crew Boss.
- Changing Positions and Pay Grades: Casuals will receive the pay rate associated with the position listed on their original Resource Order or Crew Manifest, unless the incident authorizes a change in classification level (field promotion). If a casual is assigned to a different position, the pay rate and position change is recorded on the Crew Time Report by the Incident Supervisor (this is not a Crew Boss). A new Single Resource Casual Hire Form **is not** required; the TIME Unit Leader or FSC notes the new position title, pay class and rate, and date of field promotion on the existing Single Resource Casual Hire form.
- Crew Bosses should take time to review and understand the current AD Pay Plans for DOI and FS. The pay plans can be downloaded from the [EACC Incident Business Management web page](#):
 - [DOI AD Pay Plan](#)
 - [FS AD Pay Plan](#)
- [Region 9 Forest Service does require all ADs return home with an Incident Personnel Performance Rating, ICS 225](#)

Purchasing:

- Lodging and Meals: Crew Bosses or other personnel with a purchase card may purchase lodging and meals for federal employees who do not hold a travel card. Ensure the TIME unit leader, FSC, or home unit are made aware government meals and lodging were provided. Do not provide a lodging receipt to the employee.
- Prescriptions: Crew Bosses purchasing prescriptions should be the last option after all other options have been exhausted (host unit procurement official or BUYT is preferred). If the prescription is required due to work-related injury where a CA-1 has been completed, a purchase card may be used. If an employee needs a personal prescription, a purchase card may be used and the purchaser/Crew Boss must coordinate with the TIME Unit Leader/FSC to ensure a commissary deduction is made on the OF-288.
- Baggage Fees: This is an acceptable purchase for a purchase card holder. If excess baggage fees occur, it is the employee's responsibility to remove excess weight unless the excess weight is a requirement of the position.
- As with all incident purchases, a resource order is required. Whenever possible, it is advised to discuss with the FSC prior to making purchases.

Law Enforcement Searches: Fire personnel should understand that some Regions have implemented rigorous enforcement of drug and alcohol regulations and agency policies. Crews may encounter Law Enforcement Officers with K9 units patrolling incidents for illegal substances.

Role and Responsibility of the Interagency Resource Representative (IARR): Eastern Area IARRs are there to help you. They provide support to all Eastern Area resources regarding timekeeping, travel, injuries, accidents, personnel problems, emergencies and other administrative needs. Crew Bosses should understand the IARR role and responsibilities. Prior to mobilization, Crew Bosses should review the [Eastern Area Interagency Resource Representative Guide](#).

For additional information, visit the following websites:

- [EACG Expectations of Conduct](#)
- [EACC Incident Business Management](#)
- [EACC Crew Management](#)
- [National Wildland Fire and Aviation Critical Incident Stress Management](#)

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